

NEWS RELEASE

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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RAISING HANDS AGAINST VIOLENCE

New logo and pledge card promotes awareness for YWCA's 10th annual Week Without Violence events

As domestic violence continues to be an important issue nationwide, local agencies have joined forces in Lincoln and Lancaster County area to raise awareness and promote alternative choices for the 10th annual international campaign, Week Without Violence. According to the American Institute on Domestic Violence studies:

- Every 9 seconds a woman is beaten in the United States.
- Between 3 and 4 million women are battered each year.
- 85-95% of all domestic violence victims are female.
- Women age 20 - 34 endure the highest rates of domestic violence.
- Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women.
- Women are more likely to be attacked by someone they know rather than by a stranger.

This awareness event coincides with October's Domestic Violence Awareness Month observation.

A news conference is scheduled to commence at 11 a.m. on Friday, October 8, 2004 at the YWCA, 1432 N Street, Lincoln, NE. This conference acts as the official "kick off" to various Week Without Violence events planned at Nebraska Wesleyan University, University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the YWCA. Press packets will be available upon request, and include event flyers and contact information for various programs.

News conference participants include Mayor Colleen J. Seng, City of Lincoln; Susan Scott, executive director, YWCA; Jan Deeds, director, UNL Women's Center, a "victim's voice", and Gerise Herdon, Nebraska Wesleyan University Women's Studies center. The UNL Women's Center will plan UNL's events to run from October 11th to 15th. The YWCA events are planned from October 18th to 23rd.

Using the American Sign Language symbol saying, "I love You," a pledge card and logo was designed by the YWCA's Week Without Violence steering committee to encourage community participation. Pledge cards can be picked up, signed and posted at all neighborhood Russ's and Super Saver food stores. This gives residents an opportunity to "raise their hand" against domestic violence with a general theme, "My hands will help, not hurt!" By signing a pledge card, supporters promise to live a week without violence and show others in the community how important choices are in daily routines. Pledge cards will be put on display inside the stores to show friends, family and neighbors that the community wants to end domestic violence, making it a safer place to live.

The YWCA Week Without Violence will focus on practical and sustainable non-violent alternatives. Using themes each day, an event is planned to represent the topic associated with domestic violence:

- Monday October 18th **Protecting Our Children**
 > More than a dozen child care centers citywide offer resources displays
- Tuesday October 19th **Making Our Schools Safer**
 > LPS hosts art contest for 4th & 5th graders
- Wednesday October 20th **Confronting Violence Against Women**
 > Candlelight Vigil, Rape Spouse Abuse Crisis Ctr, 2545 N St., 7:30 p.m.

- Thursday October 21st **Music & Messages**
 > Performers use music as alternative choices, 7 p.m., Old Main building, Nebraska Wesleyan University, 5000 St. Paul Ave.
- Friday October 22nd **Eliminating Racism and Hate Crimes**
 > Diversity Panel discusses hate crimes & racism on KFOR Lincoln Live with Ward Jacobson, 12:30 p.m. Guests include Susan Scott, YWCA; Chief Tom Casady, LPD ,and Larry Williams, Commission on Human Rights.
 > “Kids Only” Respite Night, free child care, ages 3-9 at YWCA
- Saturday October 23rd **Replacing Violence with Sports, Recreation & Fun**
 > Dance Lessons, free dance lessons, YWCA, 12-2 p.m.
 > Swim Against the Tide of Violence, free swim at YWCA, 12 to 3 p.m.
 > YMCA Free Swim at Cooper, Downtown & Northeast, 1-4 p.m.
 > Safe Night Dance, 6th -12th grades, YWCA, 7-10 p.m.

This citywide event is a collaborative effort between the following cosponsors, listed alphabetically:

- BryanLGH Medical Center
- Friendship Home
- Lincoln-Lancaster Women's Commission
- Lincoln Medical Education Partnership
- Lincoln Police Department Victim Witness Unit
- Lincoln Public Schools
- Nebraska Wesleyan University
- Rape/Spouse Abuse Crisis Center
- KOLN/KGIN Ch. 10/11
- B& R Stores
- YMCA
- YWCA of Lincoln.

For more information, contact Jan Deeds, (402) 472-2597 at the UNL Women's Center for university events, or Sheila Kadoi, (402) 434-3494 x 120 at the YWCA for citywide events.